

Kettle Moraine YMCA Child Abuse Prevention Policies

Our organization will not tolerate the mistreatment or abuse of youths in its programs. Any mistreatment or abuse by a staff member or volunteer (from this point referred to as staff) will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or volunteer service.

1. Our organization's physical contact policy promotes a positive, nurturing environment while protecting youth and staff. Our organization encourages appropriate physical contact with youth and prohibits inappropriate displays of physical contact. Any inappropriate physical contact by staff towards youth in the organization's programs will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or volunteer service.

The organization's policies for appropriate and inappropriate physical interactions are:

<i>Appropriate at Work</i>	
Pat on the shoulder or back	A safe way to show affection to a child
Hugging	Use a sideways hug or ask for permission if you are comforting a distressed child
High Fives	A great way to show affection
Handshake	Great team builder
Resting head on your shoulder/carrying a child	Consider the situation and age
Applying sunscreen to a child	Only if you have the child's parents' permission
Holding hands/touching hands, shoulders and/or arms	Appropriate way to guide young children to keep them safe in-group situations.
<i>Inappropriate at Work</i>	
Caressing/massaging	Too intimate
Kiss (on the cheek, top of head, mouth)	Tell child, "Kisses are for Family"
Piggyback rides, shoulder rides	Too much contact and safety concern
Back Rub	Too intimate (exception at nap time)
Wrestling or Roughhousing	It's not safe and too much contact
Playing mercy/ uncle/tickling	Games that injure and are not appropriate
Touching where swimsuits cover (with the exception of diapering)	Those are private parts
Child hanging on your body	Unsafe; you need to be able to move in a crisis
Lap sitting	Consider age of child. OK for comforting a young child but move them off your lap and next to you after a few minutes.

Guidelines to follow for adult/child interactions: Imagine if another adult or the child's authority figure walked into the room. If you would now be uncomfortable about what is happening, then it is not an appropriate interaction.

A child who comes up for a hug or wants to hold your hand is fine. However, ask yourself, why would an adult initiate this? A staff member should never be initiate physical contact with a youth.

2. To protect YMCA staff, volunteers, and program members, at no time during a YMCA program may a staff person be alone with a single child where he or she cannot be

observed by others. As staff supervise children, they should space themselves in such a way that other staff and/or members can see them.

3. Staff shall never leave a child unsupervised.
4. Our organization will not tolerate the mistreatment or abuse of one youth by another youth. Staff that work with youth will be trained on practices to prevent the abuse of one youth by another youth.
5. Restroom supervision: Staff will make sure the restroom is not occupied by suspicious or unknown individuals before allowing children to use the facilities. Staff will stand in the doorway of the rest room while children are using the restroom. This policy allows privacy for the children and protection for the staff (not being alone with a child). If staff are assisting younger children, doors to the facility must remain open. No child, regardless of age, should ever enter a bathroom alone on a field trip or at other off-site location. Always send children in threes (known as the rule of three), and whenever possible, with staff.
6. Locker room supervision: Staff will closely supervision children in locker room changing areas. If children are using a closed changing area, only one child may be sent at a time.
7. Staff shall not abuse children in any way, including
 - physical abuse - - striking, spanking, shaking, slapping, and so on;
 - verbal abuse - - humiliating, degrading, threatening, and so on;
 - sexual abuse - - touching or speaking inappropriately;
 - mental abuse - - shaming, withholding kindness, being cruel, and so on;
 - neglect - - withholding food, water, or basic care.No type of abuse will be tolerated and may be cause for immediate dismissal.
8. Staff must use positive techniques of guidance, including redirection, positive reinforcement, and encouragement rather than competition, comparison, and criticism. Staff will have age-appropriate expectations and set up guidelines and environments that minimize the need for discipline. Physical restraint is used only in emergency situations (when necessary to protect the child or other children from harm), administered only in a prescribed manner, and must be documented in writing.
9. Staff will conduct a brief visual health check of each child upon his or her arrival each time the program meets, noting any fever, bumps, bruises, burns, and so on. Questions or comments will be addressed to the parent or child in a nonthreatening way. Staff will document any questionable marks or responses.
10. Staff will respond to children with respect and consideration and treat all children equally, regardless of sex, race, religion, culture, economic level of the family, or disability.
11. Staff Conduct:
 - Staff will respect children's rights not to be touched or looked at in ways that make them feel uncomfortable, and their right to say no. Other than

diapering, children are not to be touched on areas of their bodies that would be covered by a bathing suit.

- Staff will refrain from intimate displays of affection toward others in the presence of children, parents, and staff.
- Staff must be free of physical and psychological conditions that might adversely affect children’s physical or mental health. If in doubt, an expert should be consulted.
- Staff will portray a positive role model for youth by maintaining an attitude of loyalty, patience, courtesy, tact, and maturity.
- Staff should not give excessive gifts (e.g., TV, video games, jewelry) to youth.
- Staff may not date program participants who are under the age of 18.

12. Staff are not to transport children in their own vehicles *during paid time*. Staff may transport children before or after work with the expressed written consent of the parent on file at the YMCA and Supervisor and Executive Director Approval.

13. Staff are prohibited from speaking to youth in a way that is, or could be construed by any observer, as harsh, coercive, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating.

Staff must not initiate sexually oriented conversations with youth.

Staff are not permitted to discuss their own sexual activities with youth.

Our organization’s policies for appropriate and inappropriate verbal interactions are:

<i>Appropriate Verbal Interactions</i>	<i>Inappropriate Verbal Interactions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive reinforcement • Appropriate jokes • Encouragement • Praise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name-calling • Discussing sexual encounters or in any way involving youth in the personal problems or issues of staff and volunteers • Secrets • Cursing • Off-color or sexual jokes • Shaming • Belittling • Derogatory remarks • Harsh language that may frighten, threaten or humiliate youth • Derogatory remarks about the youth or his/her family • Compliments relating to physique or body development

14. Any private electronic communication between staff and youth, including the use of social networking websites like - Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, instant messaging, texting, etc. - is prohibited.

All communication between staff and youth must be transparent. The following are examples of appropriate and inappropriate electronic communication.

<i>Appropriate Electronic Communication</i>	<i>Inappropriate Electronic Communication</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sending and replying to emails and text messages from youth ONLY when copying in a supervisor or the youth's parent • Communicating through "organization group pages" on Facebook or other approved public forums • "Private" profiles for staff and volunteers which youth cannot access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harsh, coercive, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning or humiliating comments • Sexually oriented conversations • Private messages between staff and volunteers with youth • Posting pictures of organization participants on social media sites • Posting inappropriate comments on pictures • "Friending" participants on social networking sites

In addition, provide this information to your participant's parents so that they know what is appropriate and inappropriate from your staff.

15. Staff may not be alone with children they meet in YMCA programs outside the YMCA. This includes babysitting, sleepovers, driving or riding in cars, and inviting children to their homes. Any exceptions require a written explanation before the fact and are subject to prior Supervisor and Executive Director Approval.

16. Under no circumstances should staff release children to anyone other than the authorized parent, guardian, or other adult authorized by the parent or guardian *for all licensed child care programs* (written parent authorization on file with the YMCA). *For all other programs it is the parent's responsibility to bring their child safely to the program and promptly pick their child up. For all aquatics programs parents should come into the locker room with their child.*

17. Staff are required to read and sign all policies related to identifying, documenting, and reporting child abuse and attend annual trainings on the subject, as instructed by a supervisor.

18. **YMCA Staff are mandated reporters!** Suspicions must be reported to your supervisor, designated reporter, or alternate. If a supervisor cannot be reached this should not deter anyone from reporting a situation that is an immediate need for safety. The Kettle Moraine YMCA Association prohibits inappropriate touch and verbal and physical abuse of any child.

- The staff taking the report will **notify their supervisor**, Executive Director, Risk Management, designated reporter, or alternate. Refer all media inquiries to the Executive Director.
- Complete an incident report.
- **Report occurrence to Children's and Family Services**
 - Washington County 262-335-4888
 - Ozaukee County 262-284-8200

(For emergencies call 911)

19. The YMCA will make a report to the state or local child abuse agency and will cooperate to the extent of the law with any legal authority involved. In the event the reported incident involves a program volunteer, employed staff, or YMCA member, the executive director will immediately suspend the staff from the YMCA until an investigation is complete. Failure of a staff to cooperate fully may be grounds for termination.

20. The parents or legal guardian of the child/children involved in the alleged incident will be promptly notified with the directions of the state or local agency. The YMCA's responsibility is to keep the names and contact information of those involved strictly confidential. People may learn that information some other way, such as through other children, but YMCA staff should not provide it.

21. Reinstatement of the program volunteer, employed staff person, or YMCA member will occur only after all allegations have been cleared to the satisfaction of the executive director.

22. Staff are to report to a supervisor any other staff or volunteer who violates any of the child abuse prevention policies.

**Kettle Moraine YMCA
Child Abuse Prevention Policy**

All full-time and part-time employees and program volunteers must sign this form.

I have read and understand the child abuse prevention policies and that any violation of these policies may result in termination.

Employee or volunteer signature

Date